

St. Thomas of Canterbury, Catholic Church Woodford Green

Practical Information for Ministers of Communion

What are you called? Eucharistic Ministers, Extraordinary Ministers of Communion or Ministers of Communion? The official title is: 'Extraordinary Ministers of Communion' as you are 'extra' to the Ordinary i.e. the priest or deacon. You are more commonly known as 'Ministers of Holy Communion'

The function of a Minister of Holy Communion:

During Mass:

- Assisting with the distribution of Holy Communion (under both forms)

Outside Mass:

- Administering Holy Communion during a service of 'Liturgy of the Word & Holy Communion' when a priest or deacon is not available.
- Bringing Holy Communion to the sick / housebound of the parish
- Exposing the Blessed Sacrament for a period of Adoration

A Minister of Holy Communion exercises one of these functions with the knowledge and consent of the parish priest. Ministers of Holy Communion should not exercise their ministry when Ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist are present – unless, of course, the Priest is incapacitated

Faculties – You are commissioned by the Bishop for a period of 5 years (which can be renewed) - you are only commissioned for this parish. The Bishop will issue you with a 'faculty' (a certificate giving you the authority as Minister of Communion)

Dress Code

Ministers should dress in a manner appropriate for such a special ministry and in a manner befitting the occasion. It has also been decided, as Diocesan policy, that no distinguishing dress or insignia of any kind should be worn.

Under normal circumstances only undertake one ministry at each Mass

Sunday Mass Rotas

- Frequency – this depends on you, you should let the person who co-ordinates the rota for your particular Mass know how often you are available.
- Distribution of host – at some Masses the rota indicates which Minister will distribute the host, at others it is left to the Ministers to decide (in practise this is normally the first Minister in the group of three). If you find yourself in this position and for some reason you feel unable to distribute the host, ask the Minister next to you

